

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 107

Greensburg, Indiana

July 1986

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Janet Eubank  
Lewis Loyd - Indianapolis  
Mrs. Lewis (Virginia) Loyd,  
Indianapolis  
A.A. Rousseau - Seattle, Wash.  
Virginia P. Gower - Colorado  
Springs, CO  
Mrs. Lee (Beulah) Weisner  
Richard Mahaffey  
Mrs. Richard (Velma) Mahaffey  
Lowell Hoyer - St. Paul  
Helen M. Klosterkemper  
Ruth H. Martin  
Sister Marie Antoinette Hart,  
Colorado Springs, CO

MUSEUM DONORS

Martha Davis  
Margaretie Walker  
Gene McCoy  
Walter Wheeler  
Glenn Showers  
Harry Jackson  
Howard Aldrich  
Julia Logan

MUSUEM HOURS - Musuem is open  
1-4 P.M. Friday & Sunday each  
Week until Oct. 1st. Will  
also be open on some special  
days.

= = = = = = = = = = = = = = = =  
Twenty-seventy Annual Dinner  
Meeting of the Society was held  
at the Presbyterian Church on  
April 19th with around 120 mem-  
bers. After a fine meal pre-  
pared by the ladies of the  
Church, the group was well en-  
tertained by the Batesville  
Eureka Band. Not only did they  
play many old foot stomping  
musical pieces, but their law-  
yer member gave a quite inter-  
esting history of the band  
down through the years. During  
the business session conducted  
by Pres. Maddux, the promotion  
of the reprinting of Harding's  
Decatur County was approved.

Also, the membership agreed to in-  
crease the Society dues to \$5 per  
member. The election of officers  
brought about the reelection of all  
except Morgan Miers who retired.  
Pat Smith took his place as a  
director. The Society wishes to  
thank Morgan for his faithful and  
outstanding work during his tenure.  
Franklin Corya and John Olinger  
were the committee of this very  
successful evening of entertainment  
and business.

= = = = = = = = = = = = = = = = =

Nominating Committee

William Hunter  
Virginia Carney

Auditing Committee

Dale Myers

OCCASION: Summer Meeting of the  
Decatur County Historical  
Society.

PLACE: Baptist Church  
W. Washington St.  
Greensburg, IN.

DATE: July 13, 1986  
Sunday Afternoon  
at 2:00 P.M.

PROGRAM: Judith Lawless, Director  
of the Hillforrest Mansion at Aurora,  
an expert on Folklore, and teacher  
on the college level of that sub-  
ject, will give the program. She  
has compiled folklore from this  
area, and shows slides to emphasize  
the stories she tells about strange  
happenings in houses, a hotel, a  
train seen by many where there are  
no railroad tracks, the hangings  
at Versailles, and many more great  
tales about this area. She will  
also tell us some unusual stories  
about the Hillforrest Mansion.  
This really sounds like something  
fine. A great way to spend a warm  
Sunday afternoon, mark this date.

= = = = = = = = = = = = = = = = =

REPRINT- The Society is looking into the feasibility of reprinting the Harding's History of Decatur County, 1915. If you are interested in obtaining a copy contact Dale Myers, or send a card to Historical Society of Decatur County, P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN. 47240

MEMORIAL

By Mrs. R.W. Berry (Opal McCullough) in memory of her father, Frank Kenneth McCullough.

Life Membership

J.K. Moulton

\* \* \* \* \*

Another excerpt from Oscar Miller's Memoirs.....

I think it was on Saturday, October 27, 1888 that the Republican chairman and committee sent me to make a speech at the town of Milford in the west part of the county. Large bills were printed by the Greensburg Standard announcing this meeting, and evidently were very liberally posted in Clay and Adams Townships. The Standard was the largest weekly newspaper in Decatur County and was then published by John J. Hazelrigg. It was always a Republican paper. I was to fill this appointment by myself. As the day came on for me to appear, I was not scared, but I felt some apprehension as to my ability to take care of such a large meeting. I went over and studied my speech and touched up some of the highlights and bolstered up my courage as best I could. Before the meeting I met several of the good old wheel horses who had trotted in Republican harness for years. When I shook hands with them it gave me renewed courage to do my best. Among these stalwarts of Republicanism was a man who had a decidedly Irish face, and who owned a large farm adjoining the town of Milford. He was J.B. Trimble, and he was the King Bumble Bee in that vicinity. He was ready to sting with holy argument any Democrat who would oppose him. He had voted for Abraham Lincoln, and was proud of it. He loved the principles of the Republican Party about as much as he hated the King of England. At least that was the impression I arrived at as I became acquainted with this leader of Republicanism in Clay Township.

The meeting where I was to speak was in the large school building on Main Street. Milford was at that time a rather flourishing town of 200 inhabitants, and situated in a rich farming community. It is a historic town, and was at one time the home of Edward Eggleston, who wrote that famous book known as "The Hoosier Schoolmaster". Milford was laid out and founded in the very early days of Decatur County. It is located on the beautiful banks of Clifty Creek. As the hour advanced for the meeting to begin, the town commenced to fill up with people. The small band, consisting of three snare drums, two bass drums and a shrill fife, proceeded to furnish very loud military music appropriate for the occasion. "Oh, that girl, that pretty little girl, the girl I left behind me", was a popular air for the fife and drums. The school building was at that time almost new and constructed out of brick, had four rooms below and two large rooms above separated by folding doors. These doors were thrown open and the crowd poured in. The chairman called the meeting to order. He then introduced me to a very enthusiastic audience.

I opened my speech by saying, "Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I feel highly honored to have the privilege of being invited to speak to you in this beautifully appointed school building, of which you should be proud. This building gives evidence of the thrift and progressive spirit of your community. It is well said that schools are the hope of this country.

"It is my purpose this evening to discuss some of the points in reference to the protective tariff which is sponsored by the Republican Party. The Republicans believe in the principles of a humane, protective tariff. They have advocated this belief so strongly that they have placed it in their platform. The Democrats, on the other hand, do not believe in a protective tariff. They have so stated in their platform. They would allow all foreign goods, made by cheap labor of Europe, to be shipped in and sold free of tariff in competition with our home industries, thus cheating our own laborers out of the employment that naturally belongs to them". This was the main issue between the two parties at that time. Through all my speech that evening I hung pretty close to my written and prepared speech.

I noticed that whenever I made a decided point, my friend, Mr. Trimble, would start the applause. At one place, when I was saying something that was not altogether complimentary to the Democrats, he interrupted me and stood up, saying that I was not nearly harsh enough, or words to that effect. I thanked him for his very kindly suggestion, and then proceeded with my speech. I think I met Richard Braden and Nelson Mowrey for the first time at that meeting. I spoke for about three quarters of an hour; and from the rather generous applause given me at times, and from the fact that no one walked out on me, I had enough egotism to feel rather comfortable over the event.

§     §     §     §     §     §     §     §     §     §     §     §

1917 U.S.S. Charleston 1918

"The Queen of the Seas"

For a long time I have been wanting to record a history of my service in the United States Navy during "World War One".

I am writing this from incidents recorded in a Diary I kept, also with entries from a diary of a member of the Black Gang, (firemen) as rewritten by Lieutenant Francis J. Harney, Ch/U.S.N.

I never won any commendations for medals, never got in any trouble, just done what I was told. Most of it was hard work and some hardships, mostly because of the weather. I had been raised to work, so that did not bother me. I never got homesick like many of the boys, some nearly lost their minds. I enjoyed my Navy service. The Navy was good to me.

The United States of America declared a state of war with Germany April 6th, 1917. Immediately our country began to marshall its man power and resources for an all out war effort.

On June 17, 1917, I, William W. Parker of Greensburg, Indiana enlisted in the United State Navy at Indianapolis, Ind. As the training stations, or boot camps were overcrowded, I was sent home and called back August 27, 1917. The next day 101 of us recruits left Indianapolis for the Naval Training Station, Newport, Rhode Island. One of the boys was Charles Osburn of Oakland, Illinois.

We became the best of friends, serving together throughout the war. After the war he came to Greensburg and married my cousin, Helen Richey.

After eight weeks at Newport, mostly conditioning, drilling with rifles, getting shots, etc., we were transferred to Commonwealth Pier at Boston, to await assignment to a ship. The U.S.S. Charleston was needing about fifteen more seamen so word was passed out along the grapevine that she was about to leave for a cruise to China. Of course we swallowed this hook, line and sinker. Several of us raced down to the office and fifteen were selected, including Osburn and myself. We were closer to China in Boston than we ever would be.

On November 16, 1917, at 5:00 P.M. we were sent aboard where preparations were already being made to put to sea. This was to be my home until October 15, 1919. At 11:00 that night the anchor was raised. A course set for New York in the teeth of a raging, cold Northeaster. I, a green ignorant recruit was not long getting my baptism as a sea going sailor.

I was soon very seasick, thought I was about to die and did not care if I did. I was never bothered much by sea sickness after this. Some boys never got over it and were transferred to shore duty.

The U.S.S. Charleston was a protected curiser and was launched in 1902. She was one of three ships of this class, the others the St. Louis and the San Diego. The San Diego was later in the war sunk by a sub off Fire Island outside New York harbor.

The Charleston carried a peacetime crew of about 450 men and officers. We had about 650 in our regular crew. We had four smoke stacks, which were an identifying mark. Four fire rooms with 16 boilers and could make a top speed of 20-21 knots. Usually steamed around 15-16 knots except in convoys when the speed was set by the slower merchant ships sometimes only 6-10 knots per hour. She was armed with 3 inch and 6 inch guns and 6 inches of armour plate. The deck force was divided in four divisions. I was in the third division which was on the starboard side, aft.

The World One naval ships were all coal burners so coaling ship and the cleaning up occupied a lot of our time. Four barges each holding about 400 tons would tie up alongside. One for each division and it was a contest to see which division could empty their barge first. The coal was shoveled by hand in large canvas bags, hoisted aboard by winches, dragged to the coal chutes and emptied. The bunkers held 1800 tons. The band played during coaling, peppy tunes. "The Old Grey Mare" was one of their favorites.

On arrival at New York the first duty, as always, was to coal ship. We took on 2280 tons of coal, 1800 tons in the bunkers, 30 tons in the ventilation chutes, 200 tons in the firerooms, 70 tons in the forecastle, 120 tons on the quarter deck, 40 tons on the superstructure, all this in bags. This was done so as to enable the cruisers to make the round trip without touching for coal on the other side. This resolved in continual coaling as bags were emptied every day to replace that which was burnt. This extra coal made the ship top heavy besides the structural added strain. It caused many anxious moments.

The second convoy of the Charleston (my first) was at midnight

November 27, 1917 with the convoy composed of the Aevlus, Julia Luckinbach, San Jacinto, Mallory, Calemores, Tenedores and the destroyer Beals. Of course the usual rumors prevail. We're going to Italy, to England and several other places. One of the convoy had considerable trouble and got lost for a day, and radioing the International code, which the enemy could read. The North Atlantic really lived up to its winter reputation. Storm after storm was encountered. I have heard civilians, who know nothing of the conditions under which the cruisers were operating pour out their sympathy for the poor boys in the trenches, while admitting the good work of the Navy, would state the sailors did not have to endure hardships, had dry quarters, warm dry clothes. Day and night the lookouts, on the bridge, stood with glasses glued to their eyes, no matter how biting the wind. The topside gunners stood for hours, spray and spume dashing up and coating their garments with ice and down below on the main and gun decks with the ever ready gunners at their positions with ice water coming in with every roll of the ship, for the gun ports had to be kept open. Bedding was soaked or damp with no chance for drying. It was so rough the mess tables could not be set up and we squatted on the wet decks to grab what chow we could. All lights were tabu. This meant eating at half past three or four which meant a long fast till daybreak the next morning. All the lights we had were dim blue battle lights.

On the 8th of December 1917, we met the destroyers coming out from France and turned our convoy over to them, our duty completed, turned around and within record speed left the war zone as fast as possible. Except for a near collision the next night, with an east-bound ship, the return trip was uneventful, arriving at Old Point Comfort on my birthday, December 17, 1917. Tonsilitis and flu victims numbered about 16% of the crew on this trip. I escaped this time. After 14 days in port, taking on stores and with several overnight leaves to Norfolk and Newport News on Feb. 4th, left the cape about dark with 9 merchant ships, the Britishers Bickenham and War Rose, the French Ville de Cran, the Norwegian Havo, the American Santiago, Millineaket and Mexican a horse transport. Heavy fog and snow squalls dispersed the convoy on the 5th and it was not until the 12th when all were assembled again. The wake of the Mexican was marked by a trail of dead horses as the weather was just too rough for them.

On the night of March 12th, the steamer of the Charleston ran under the tow line of the barge wande in Hampton Roads and the Cox swain E.T. Hanby one of the boys of my division was knocked overboard and never seen again. The search lights of all the war craft in the harbor played the waters for hours. While in Hampton Roads sudden orders to convoy 3 British Subs from Newport, R.I. to Bermuda caused the ship to put to sea with 120 men and 10 officers on the beach. Fortunately, I was on the ship. For eight days they worked, ate and slept in their dress blues, orphans without a home, they were a sorry lot when they climbed over the side of their real home.

Thirty one ships were in the convoy that the Charleston headed out of New York, May 3rd, 1918. A heavy fog set in on the 12th and caused a collision between the Hisco and the Zaanland. Twelve hours later the Zaanland sank. The men having been transferred to the Manalbwo. During this trip a patient was transferred from one of the ships to the Charleston, which was skillfully done. Turn about was made at midnight the 14th of May, and Old Point Comfort, VA. without incident other than the suffering of the general mess from

ptomaine poisoning. Anchor was dropped May 23rd. The weather was very calm. This entire trip was really enjoyable. While anchored in Hampton Roads, on June 27th, a gale blowing in from sea made it impossible to run any small boats. Engines were kept in readiness as all the ships were dragging their anchors. One motor sailor broke loose and drifted to beach at Newport News and another sank at the boom carrying down the crew of three. All were easily rescued except one. A rope finally reached him, as he was being dragged aboard he lost his hold. Ham Potter, a bos'n mate in our division, dived from the top side and succeeded in holding the unconscious man until aid came.

Instead of being home on a 10-day leave on the 10 days after getting into Boston, we were leaving New York with 5 troop ships. Late the next day junction was made with 3 more troop ships from Newport News which were turned over to us by the Seattle, Destroyer Calhoun and sub 0-5. While we were at mess on the second of August, a periscope was reported 1,000 yards off the port bow. General quarters played havoc with the crew's meal. Tables were upset and food spilled all over the deck and everything swept aside in the mad rush to battle stations, returning from "secure" there was nothing left to eat. On the fifth at dawn the Denver was sighted with a convoy. About 10:00 the Main reported a mine and we turned back to explode it by gunfire but could not find it. An hour afterward another mine was reported but the rough weather prevented our locating it. August 10th little specks began to appear on the horizon and soon 10 destroyers were running in and about the convoy like rats. We slowed down, watched the troopships file by, turned and headed for home, another job successfully completed.

About the only amusement at sea were moving pictures which were shown to the crew when work permitted. On the night of August 10th, Hazel Dawn in the "Feud Girl" was being shown. The films caught fire and caused quite a conflagration for a time. While the regular firemen were running the hose down from the gun deck the gun crew on the No. 14 gun were removing the powder to safety. While the regular firemen were getting the blaze under control, two volunteers rushed to the quarter deck, connected the quarter deck hose and shot it down the hatch outside the wardroom. At the first sound of the alarm, the full force of the engines were turned into the fire hose, with the result a terrible pressure was put on the hose. The hose wriggled and squirted into the Paymaster's room where it wrought havoc unsung. His wild yells soon put the volunteers out of business, not however, before the usual volunteer damage had been done.

Early the morning of the 16th we passed the wreckage of the after part of a schooner awash. It was a matter of conjecture whether it was a victim of a sub or the elements. But one thing was certain - some human being had put to sea with their home, had put their lives in its trust. Where were they? Heaven alone knew. That same evening we passed the battleship Nevada and another dread night. Early the next morning we opened fire on a suspicious wake about 4,000 feet off the port beam. Nineteen rounds of 6" and 3 rounds of 3" shells were fired before the object was found to be floating wreckage. This reminds us of another cruiser. She fired an enormous number of shells at what appeared to be a periscope but turned out to be the leg of an upturned table. Anchor was dropped August 19 in Hampton Roads, VA. coaled and on the 24th got under way for New York.

Finally came the long expected orders to proceed to Boston Navy Yard for a month's repairs. For a long time the advisability of having a ball in New York had been agitated. Now the time was deemed right. Committees appointed five thousand dollars raised to cover expenses. The night of the 17th of October found two thousand persons dancing at the Charleston's ball at the Hotel Astor. At midnight a five course dinner was served. It was a tired but happy crew which reported on board ship at noon the next day. Their joys were just beginning for tomorrow Boston was to be our objective. Furlough slips had already been made out giving every one a ten day leave with traveling time. But alas for all man made plans. Orders came from Washington. Take full bunkers and usual deck load for convoy trip. Start coaling tonight at once. So after an all night session of dancing (I did not dance and as a skeleton crew had to remain aboard I missed the ball) all hands turned out, coaled all night and the next day and night besides taking on stores. A totally exhausted crew.

I arrived at home in Greensburg in time for breakfast November 11th. Soon the news came that Peace had been declared and I knew my wartime duty was over. Of course my enlistment was not over and I was not discharged for eleven more months.

During the war the Charleston steamed 69,818 miles and convoyed 157 ships to various destinations. There were sixty officers attached to the Charleston during the war. We burnt tons and tons of coal and ate many tons of food.

We were very fortunate, we lost no ships while in our protection, lost only one man by accident and lost four from the flu. It is a tribute to the engineering force that our engines could steam so many miles with so little trouble, some ships were always breaking down.

This concludes my wartime duty, and I will record some of the events in my peace time service.

THE END

§   §   §   §   §   §   §   §   §   §   §   §

I HAVE AN AUNT WHO MARRIED SO LATE IN LIFE  
THAT MEDICARE PICKED UP 80% OF THE HONEYMOON.

---

#### MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal    New

Gift    Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMORIALS

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

1251-1252  
Mr. & Mrs. Shel Smith  
518 North East St.  
Greensburg, IN 47240

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual Dinner Meeting of the Decatur County Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19, 1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

PROGRAM: An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

MUSEUM DONORS

James & June Colson  
Dr. D.D. Dickson  
Dorothy Patton Tucker  
Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, IL.  
Abigail C. Hutton  
Francis M. Clark  
Jerry L. England  
Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples  
Kathy Ford  
Luella Webb, Columbus  
Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope  
Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD  
Mrs. Joan Dwenger  
Mrs. Tom Neimeyer  
Leo R. Bertrand

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G. Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy Shannon by James L. Shannon.

GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.  
Martha Samuels  
Robert D. Hall  
Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY  
W.L. Fisher  
William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is plessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

---

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleeting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleet last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairylnd. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

=====

#### REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

=====

**MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS**

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal  New

Gift  Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual Dinner Meeting of the Decatur County Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19, 1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

PROGRAM: An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

\$

MUSEUM DONORS

James & June Colson

Dr. D.D. Dickson

Dorothy Patton Tucker

Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

=====

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, IL.  
Abigail C. Hutton

Francis M. Clark

Jerry L. England

Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples

Kathy Ford

Luella Webb, Columbus

Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope  
Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD

Mrs. Joan Dwenger

Mrs. Tom Neimeyer

Leo R. Bertrand

=====

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G. Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy Shannon by James L. Shannon.

GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.

Martha Samuels

Robert D. Hall

Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY

W.L. Fisher

William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is blessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

---

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleeting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleeting last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

=====

#### REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

=====

**MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS**

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal       New

Gift

Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual Dinner Meeting of the Decatur County Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19, 1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

PROGRAM: An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$  
MUSEUM DONORS

James & June Colson  
Dr. D.D. Dickson  
Dorothy Patton Tucker  
Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

=====

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

=====

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, IL.  
Abigail C. Hutton  
Francis M. Clark  
Jerry L. England  
Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples  
Kathy Ford  
Luella Webb, Columbus  
Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope  
Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD  
Mrs. Joan Dwenger  
Mrs. Tom Neimeyer  
Leo R. Bertrand

=====

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

=====

MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G. Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy Shannon by James L. Shannon.

=====

GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.  
Martha Samuels  
Robert D. Hall  
Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY  
W.L. Fisher  
William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is pleased with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

---

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleetting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleetting last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairylight. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

---

REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

---

#### MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal     New

Gift     Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMORIALS

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual Dinner Meeting of the Decatur County Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19, 1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

PROGRAM: An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

\$

MUSEUM DONORS

James & June Colson

Dr. D.D. Dickson

Dorothy Patton Tucker

Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, IL.

Abigail C. Hutton

Francis M. Clark

Jerry L. England

Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples

Kathy Ford

Luella Webb, Columbus

Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD

Mrs. Joan Dwenger

Mrs. Tom Neimeyer

Leo R. Bertrand

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G. Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy Shannon by James L. Shannon.

GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.

Martha Samuels

Robert D. Hall

Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY

W.L. Fisher

William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is blessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

---

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleetting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleeting last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

---

#### REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

=====

**MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS**

**Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal  New

Gift  Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual Dinner Meeting of the Decatur County Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19, 1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

PROGRAM: An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

\$

MUSEUM DONORS

James & June Colson  
Dr. D.D. Dickson  
Dorothy Patton Tucker  
Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, IL.  
Abigail C. Hutton  
Francis M. Clark  
Jerry L. England  
Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples  
Kathy Ford  
Luella Webb, Columbus  
Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope  
Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD  
Mrs. Joan Dwenger  
Mrs. Tom Neimeyer  
Leo R. Bertrand

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G. Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy Shannon by James L. Shannon.

GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.  
Martha Samuels  
Robert D. Hall  
Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY  
W.L. Fisher  
William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is blessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

=====

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg, Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately 75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleeting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleetting last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

---

REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

---

#### MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal  New

Gift  Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMORIALS

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

TO PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS WHICH HAVE  
CONTRIBUTED OR ASSISTED IN THE PUBLICATION  
OF THIS BULLETIN

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual Dinner Meeting of the Decatur County Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19, 1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

PROGRAM: An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

\$

MUSEUM DONORS

James & June Colson

Dr. D.D. Dickson

Dorothy Patton Tucker

Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

=====

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

=====

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, IL  
Abigail C. Hutton

Francis M. Clark

Jerry L. England

Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples

Kathy Ford

Luella Webb, Columbus

Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope

Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD

Mrs. Joan Dwenger

Mrs. Tom Neimeyer

Leo R. Bertrand

=====

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

=====

MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G. Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy Shannon by James L. Shannon.

=====

GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.

Martha Samuels

Robert D. Hall

Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY

W.L. Fisher

William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is blessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleeting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleet last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

=====

REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

=====

**MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS**

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal     New

Gift     Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

/THE BULLETIN/

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual Dinner Meeting of the Decatur County Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19, 1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

PROGRAM: An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

MUSEUM DONORS

James & June Colson

Dr. D.D. Dickson

Dorothy Patton Tucker

Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, IL.

Abigail C. Hutton

Francis M. Clark

Jerry L. England

Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples

Kathy Ford

Luella Webb, Columbus

Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD

Mrs. Joan Dwenger

Mrs. Tom Neimeyer

Leo R. Bertrand

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G. Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy Shannon by James L. Shannon.

GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.

Martha Samuels

Robert D. Hall

Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY

W.L. Fisher

William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is blessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

---

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleetting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleeting last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

---

REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

=====

**MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS**

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal  New

Gift  Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

## /THE BULLETIN/

---

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

---

Vol. 4 , No. 106

## Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual  
Dinner Meeting of the  
Decatur County  
Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19,  
1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

**PROGRAM:** An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

James & June Colson  
Dr. D.D. Dickson  
Dorothy Patton Tucker  
Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business.

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Farmer, Winnetka, IL.  
Abigail C. Hutton  
Francis M. Clark  
Jerry L. England  
Mrs. H.T. (Mildred) Staples  
Kathy Ford  
Luella Webb, Columbus  
Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope  
Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD  
Mrs. Joan Dwenger  
Mrs. Tom Neimeyer  
Leo R. Bertrand

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

## MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G.  
Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by  
Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy  
Shannon by James L. Shannon.

## GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.  
Martha Samuels  
Robert D. Hall  
Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY  
W.L. Fisher  
William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is blessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

---

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleeting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleet last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

---

REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Some how we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

=====

**MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS**

**Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal     New

Gift

Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

## /THE BULLETIN/

---

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

---

Vol. 4 , No. 106

## Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual  
Dinner Meeting of the  
Decatur County  
Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19,  
1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

**PROGRAM:** An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

James & June Colson  
Dr. D.D. Dickson  
Dorothy Patton Tucker  
Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, Il.  
Abigail C. Hutton  
Francis M. Clark  
Jerry L. England  
Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples  
Kathy Ford  
Luella Webb, Columbus  
Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope  
Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD  
Mrs. Joan Dwenger  
Mrs. Tom Neimeyer  
Leo R. Bertrand

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

## MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G.  
Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by  
Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy  
Shannon by James L. Shannon.

## GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.  
Martha Samuels  
Robert D. Hall  
Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY  
W.L. Fisher  
William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is blessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

=====

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleeting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleeting last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

---

REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

---

#### MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS

Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal  New

Gift

Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMORIALS

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

## /THE BULLETIN/

---

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY

Vol. 4 , No. 106

## Greensburg, Indiana

April 1986

OCCASION: Twenty-seventh Annual  
Dinner Meeting of the  
Decatur County  
Historical Society.

DATE: Saturday, April 19,  
1986 at 6:30 P.M.

DINNER: Ladies of the Presbyterian Church. The dinner is \$4.50 each. Please reserve by check only. Send check to: Ruth McClintic, 632 W. 1st. St., Greensburg, IN. Dead line is the evening of April 16.

**PROGRAM:** An "Old Type Band Concert" is being planned. Including a description of how old bands were organized and where they played. The band will play some selections from that era. It should be fun for all.

James & June Colson  
Dr. D.D. Dickson  
Dorothy Patton Tucker  
Mrs. Charles G. Patterson

LAST MEETING of the Society was held at the Baptist Church the afternoon of Jan. 26, 1986 with some 80 members and guests in attendance. Rev. Robinson of the Hopewell Baptist Church gave the program entitled "The Parable of the Jars". He discussed antique glass jars, and in doing so, gave several religious messages for thought. Interesting and very well done. He has collected around 1,700 different fruit jars. The reprinting of the old Decatur Co. History was discussed during a short business

The President, Marlin Maddux, appointed himself and Dale Meyers to investigate. Fine refreshments were served by Mary Doles, Marge Hunter and L. Maddux, all in a dandy meeting.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

John Charles Parmer, Winnetka, Il.  
Abigail C. Hutton  
Francis M. Clark  
Jerry L. England  
Mrs. H.T.(Mildred) Staples  
Kathy Ford  
Luella Webb, Columbus  
Mrs. Maurice (Betty) Randall, Hope  
Harold F. Winter, Silver Springs, MD  
Mrs. Joan Dwenger  
Mrs. Tom Neimeyer  
Leo R. Bertrand

ITEMS given to the Museum are eligible for income tax deductions. This is a fine way to reduce your taxes while supporting the local county museum. No doubt, there are many artifacts stored in attics and various unhandy spots far from interested eyes. An exhibit in the Museum gives many the opportunity to view some of our heritage. Search your hidden corners.

## MEMORIALS

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Oscar G.  
Miller by Mrs. Charles (Eleanor) Cox.

In memory of Theodora Hamon by  
Clara Hilt.

In memory of James & Dorothy  
Shannon by James L. Shannon.

## GIFTS

James Armbrust, Mt. Vernon, WA.  
Martha Samuels  
Robert D. Hall  
Helen McCord, Wurtsboro, NY  
W.L. Fisher  
William J. Weisner, Columbus

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Robert L. Meek  
Margaret Polanski  
The Society is plessed with folks  
who are willing to help with its  
continued success.

=====

RED STAR-If there is a  
RED STAR on your address  
label, it's time to pay  
your DUES for 1986.

OHIO RIVER FLOOD OF 1937

From the diary of Emma Taylor, RR# 1, Greensburg,  
Indiana, a housewife on an Indiana farm approximately  
75 miles north of the river.

Mon. Jan. 4 Cold sunny day with high wind--real January day.

Thurs. Jan. 7 Rainy and warm today. Too bad for the men to work.

Fri. Jan. 8 Temp. 60° or more. Cloudy this morning. Very warm all day.

Sat. Jan. 9 Weather too bad for men to work out...Adams churches were sponsoring fox drive today. Called off because of awful weather.

Sun. Jan. 10 Ice storm began. Last night it began sleeting and kept it up all night. I could hardly sleep for the noise the trees made creaking and snapping. I heard one big crash and lay there and cried while thinking how all our beautiful trees were suffering, and just prayed the wind would stop. It stopped about midnight. This morning the world was a wonderland.

Mon. Jan. 11 The ice stayed on all day yesterday and today. Not a bit on roads but  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep on fences and wires and trees. Sun has not shone for three days.

Wed. Jan. 13 Ice went off today as it grew warmer and began to rain. NO sunshine yet. Rained all afternoon. Roads just full of water. Still raining.

Thurs. Jan. 14 High water. Rained awful last night and this morning water was so high the school hack would not get through. Leeming took us to see the high water at Clifty bridge up past Brown's and (Flat-rock River) at Downeyville. Spent most of the morning at it. Such a sight! Nearly every room in our house is leaking today. All over the new wallpaper and places it never leaked before. Ironed after dinner. Finally got the ironing done. Air has been so damp things won't dry and too warm for fire in stoves.

Fri. Jan. 15 Thundered and lighteninged tonight. Sun has not shone for a week. Hack did not come this morning. Road flooded at L. Brown's and at St. Paul School water works flooded. Had to go to (Greensburg) to see about sister's house. Her basement was flooded. Planned to go see a Shirley Temple movie tonight--too much flu and bad weather. Turned cold after dinner.

Sat. Jan. 16 Sun shone all day today.

Sun. Jan. 17 Another bad day. So much flu around Adams, decided to stay away from Sunday School.

Mon. Jan. 18 Rained last night. The water is getting high again....Fixed the windows upstairs and in the attic. Hope we stopped the leaks.

Tues. Jan. 19 Still gloomy.

Wed. Jan. 20 Another bad day. Radio says Ohio is rising above 13 stages.

Thurs. Jan. 21 Very bad day. School bus came but John said they were afraid to cross Connal's bridge where the water was about 2 feet from floor. Kids walked over---then the bus. Other bus couldn't get out of Adams. Went to town after dinner to get hair cut. Just got down on square when it began to pour...We are getting so distressed about the flood. Been hearing such terrible things over the radio. Getting worse all the time.

Fri. Jan. 22 Ice again. Snow 7 inches. Started sleet last night. Everything a glare of ice. The school bus came but returned at 10 with the kids for the state road was so icy. The flood is terrible at Cincinnati and Ohio River towns. We've listened all day to the broadcasts. River came in on Lawrenceburg last night. Tonight millions of gallons of gasoline loose on river at Cincinnati. Terrible danger ahead. Epidemic, too. Snowed all day. 7 inches of snow at suppertime. We are so cozy and things look beautiful. Those poor souls on the river!

Sat. Jan. 23 Sun came out this morning and everything glistened like crystal silver. Looked like fairyland. Tonight we sat in the firelight at the big west window in the dining room. The moonlight on the ice-covered trees made them look like they were trimmed in tiny electric lights. A big yellow star stood in the sky. Hard to believe that a few hours drive from us a wild, dirty yellow river is roaring death and terror in its rushing waves.

Been listening to the flood news over radio all day. It is worse in recorded history of the river. John and Hannah had lots of fun in the snow.

Sun. Jan. 24 Dreary Sunday. Such a terrible day. Roads simply awful. Flood worse and worse. Called out here for supplies collected at Shelhorn's. Asked us if we will take refugees into our homes. 200 people coming from Lawrenceburg. They are opening the Big Gym at Greensburg for them. I found a lot of warm wollen things in the old trunk upstairs to send. WLW (radio) station and Crosley plant on fire--as is all the river.

Mon. Jan. 25 Sunshine beautiful today. River news is worse. Rising 80 feet at Cincinnati. Refugees didn't arrive Greensburg yesterday. They were cut off by the river before reaching train. Today we went to St. Paul to get glasses fixed. They are getting ready for refugees at St. Paul School and Adams. Drove to Greensburg to find out more. About 40 refugees at Big Gym. Expecting 500 more tonight. Waiting call for whatever is expected of us. Listening to radio all day. Roads are much better today.

Tues. Jan. 26 Flood news very depressing. Fine sunshiny morning. L.A. had to go out on Red Cross drive after dinner.

Wed. Jan. 27 L.A. finished Red Cross drive this morning. Nice day. The River is falling--or rather not rising at Cincinnati. The refugees come in slowly. They can hardly be forced to leave the river. Made Hannah a coat out of one of mine.

Thurs. Jan. 28 Looks rainy. This is J.P.'s birthday but had to give up all plans. Nothing certain these days. Wanted to give him a party. All meetings, games and President's Birthday Ball called off. Basketball Tourney will be at St. Paul. (because refugees are in Big Gym at Greensburg) Baked birthday cake this afternoon and finished the coat for Hannah; now can send her outgrown suit to Red Cross. Expecting the preacher to spend a few days at our house. Got his room ready. Signed up on Red Cross milk subscription today.

Fri. Jan. 29 Awful fog. Dangerous driving. Too bad to go to the Tourney. So disappointed. Counted so much on it. The preacher couldn't come today. He is busy working in relief up town. 225 refugees up there now. More expected. Heartbreaking news all day long on radio and in papers.

Tues. Feb. 9 Went with neighbors this morning to the river. It was quite cold. Did not imagine what flood destruction was like. What we saw at Lawrenceburg! and Aurora! How those poor people will ever have the heart to start over! It just cannot be described.

=====

#### REMINISCENCES OF MY FATHER: By William W. Parker

My Father, John Haden Parker, was born in a log cabin on a farm adjoining the McCarty Cemetery, in Orange Tp., Rush Co., IN. Jan. 26, 1866, son of William Parker and Sarah Elizabeth Crane Parker, commonly called "Sis".

His father soon purchased a farm in Anderson Tp., three miles northwest of Milroy, where he spent his boyhood. His mother died Nov. 6, 1873, leaving her husband William and John, 7 years, and his sister, Minnie Ann 6. On Dec. 9, 1874 William married Josephine Simps Crane who was a sister of Sarah Elizabeth, who was a kind and devoted mother to the children.

Tradition has brought down two events in the life of John H. which could have had tragic events. When at the age of three while washing a cucumber, a plank gave away and he fell several feet into the open well. Miraculously he was able to climb the rough walls to safety, all unknown to his parents. On another occasion he wandered off and was found by a search party in a dense woods a mile from his home.

He attended the one-room King school near his home. He was fond of hunting and fishing and was an excellent shot with both rifle and shotgun. I have a receipt for \$18.75, which his step-mother paid for him for seining fish.

In 1886, when 20 years of age he enrolled at Central Normal College at Danville, IN. where he was graduated.

On February 10, 1892, he married Miss Nettie Thomas, daughter of William and Ann Eliza Wood Thomas. They rented a house at 208 East First St., Greensburg where I was born Dec. 17, 1895.

The next spring he purchased a home at 718 North Franklin St. of Joshua Poole, where he and his family lived for over 50 years. "He read law", a term used instead of student, in early times, in the law office of Miller and Gavin, until 1894, when he was admitted to the Decatur County Bar.

He formed a partnership with Myron Jenkins, who later was mayor of Greensburg for many years. They opened their office in the Odd Fellows building on the Northeast corner of the county square. Later he formed a partnership with Thomas Creath and when Creath moved to Versailles, he opened his own office over the Fair Store. This building is now owned and occupied by Hunter Pharmacy.

I still have the swinging metal sign which he put up at the foot of the stairs leading to his office. It simply said John H. Parker Lawyer.

As you might expect it was quite a struggle for a young man to start out, with no reputation and naturally no clients. Somehow we did survive. I never remember not having nice enough clothes and plenty to eat.

I expect one of the first requirements for a Law Office would be law books. I do not know where he got them but he had several cases of Leather bound books. I doubt if many of them were ever used, yet, they did look rather impressive. They did have another use, when a client would pay him a few dollars, he would deposit it in one of the books and withdraw it as needed. He forgot about a lot of the deposits and after his death, the books were leafed through and several hundred dollars in paper money was found, some

the old large bills. He had several of the old wooden solid bottom chairs with a round bentwood back filled in with newels, a wooden rocker with the rockers wore flat from much rocking. The flat wooden arms show a lot of indiscriminate whittling. Probably by impatient clients. We have this chair still stored in our barn, and I often look at it with an idea of restoring it, but shake my head and back away. His desk was an old black poplar table, six feet long, covered with black oil cloth. As he was a short man he cut two or three inches off of two legs so it would slope towards him. In a corner sat an old "Mosler Safe." It was seldom locked, but probably had some fireproof value. The outstanding piece was a large golden oak quarter sawed roll top desk, on which I am now writing this article. His filing system was the safe, the roll top desk, two Clark O.N.T. spool cabinets and his desk which was always covered by the large advertising blotters. It was remarkable what he could file under those blotters and more remarkable he could find what he was looking for. He was always ready to accept new innovations, so was early to accept the typewriter. His first of many machines was an Oliver that typed from underneath. You had to raise the carriage every few moments to see if it was writing, and check for errors. He used four fingers and could type rather fast. I have always regretted I did not get his cast iron Notorial seal and a fancy iron & glass ink well. I have never seen another like it. On the wall was a framed picture of the "Father of Our Country", and a large calendar, depicting some famous battle, wood or mountain scene and suggesting the advisability of trading at the Pulse and Porter Lumber Co., or some other local business.

He early realized the Abstract Business might be a good field, so he laboriously compiled a complete set of abstract books of Decatur Co. This work was all done by hand and took several years.

He was always self-conscious of his small stature and did not have a very good speaking voice, so confined his business mostly to Probate and Abstract work. When he would have a trial case of any consequences he would get one of the other attorneys to assist him.

In the early part of this century we were still traveling along at a very moderate pace. Not much money but every one who wanted a job had one. People actually had or took time to visit. Every day several people would visit my Father's office, just to pass the time or to find out, "What's New?" I recall Dr. Rucker, editor of the "New Era," Clint St. John, Custodian of the cemetery, Dr. Sylvester Wright, our family physician, whose favorite remedy for tonsillitis was to paint them with iodine. I can taste it yet. George Clemons the jeweler, Smith Bussell an alderman and possibly one of the best checker players in Greensburg, and several others, usually staying only a few minutes. I still consider the years up to World War One as some of the best of my life.

About 1915, needing more room, he moved into the newly built Edkins building over the Morris 5 and 10 cent store, and that is exactly what it was, a 5 and 10 cent store.

At this time his business increasing beyond his capacity to care for it, he hired Miss Mabel Cotterman, a local girl who later married Harry Black and after Mr. Black's death married Myron Freeland, one of the prominent citizens of our county. Later he also hired Miss Minnie Hatfield who later married Loren Doles. These girls originally received \$2.50 per week. They stayed with him for many years. In 1925 he took a young man Dan R. Ford into his office as a partner. This worked out very harmonious for both, until 1950 when due to failing health, he gave the business to Mr.

Ford and spent the remaining years of his life between the homes of his sons, William and Robert.

He was a 58 year member of the Greensburg Lodge No. 148 Knights of Pythias and for many years President of the Decatur County Welfare Board. He participated in the organization of the Decatur County National Bank, and served as President from Feb. 6, 1934 until Jan. 14, 1948, at which time he became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

My Father was always clean and neatly dressed. Always wore a white collar and usually a little black bow or string tie. The kind you hook on the collar button. He was very opposed to tobacco and intoxicating liquors. My Father and Mother were farm people and never lost their love for the land. While still a poor struggling lawyer, in 1898, he borrowed the money and purchased a poor rolling farm in Clay Tp., Decatur County, consisting of 200 acres with about one half tillable. It took until WWI before he got out of debt. He farmed this farm with hired labor until 1921, when after my marriage, my brother Robert and I took over the management with his help.

He was an avid reader of any magazines, books or bulletins pertaining to farming and put many of these practices in use. He was a forerunner in land conservation in our community, like using concrete walls to stop erosion in hollows, clay tile for drainage and sodded waterways, trying out new kinds of grasses, etc. The neighbors referred to our place, as the experimental farm, maybe with a little derision.

He was a great advocate for diversity. In other words, "don't put all your eggs in one basket." So we had poultry, dairy cows, hogs and brood mares. Raised corn, wheat, soy beans. We were the second farm in our community to experiment with soy beans. At one time we had 10 acres of fruit, apples, peaches, plums, grapes and strawberries, and a must was a big garden. I never regretted living on the land. Where else could you watch the wobbly colt, the new born calf, the squeeling pig, all hunting for their first meal, or following the plow and smelling the fresh aroma of new turned soil. I and my family have lived on this land for over 57 years.

John H. Parker died after a short illness, on March 28, 1956. Aged 90 years, two months and two days and is buried beside his wife and son Robert on the family plot in South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana.

=====

**MEMBERSHIPS and MEMORIALS**

**Historical Society of Decatur County, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 163 Greensburg, IN. 47240

Yearly Membership \$2.00  
Life Membership \$100.00

Payable by January 1st.

Renewal     New

Gift     Life

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

IF GIFTS: From \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* IF THERE'S A RED STAR ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL, IT'S TIME TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR 1986 \*\*\*\*

SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President.....Marlin P. Maddux  
521 West St. City  
Phone: 663-2942  
1st. V. Pres.....Don Minning  
2nd. V. Pres.....Readawn Metz  
Rec. Sec.....Diana Springmier  
Cor. Sec.....Peg Miller  
Treas.....Ruth McClintic

DIRECTORS

Steve Stradley  
Mary Doles  
Franklin Corya  
Robert Conwell  
Allan Beall  
Diana Swegman

EDITOR OF BULLETIN

Van P. Batterton  
525 N. Broadway  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

MUSEUM TRUSTEES

Jackie Mendenhall  
Earl Vanderbur  
Allan Beall  
Marjorie Hunter  
Voyle Morgan  
John Olinger

MUSEUM CURATOR

Jackie Mendenhall  
663-8277

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Lee Lauderdale  
663-2769

SOCIETY'S AGENT

William H. Robbins

COUNTY HISTORIAN

Dale Myers  
663-4370

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
DECATUR COUNTY, INC.  
P.O. BOX 163  
GREENSBURG, INDIANA 47240

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 53  
Greensburg, IN. 47240

629  
Mr. Dale G. Myers  
220 E. Walnut St.  
Greensburg, IN 47240